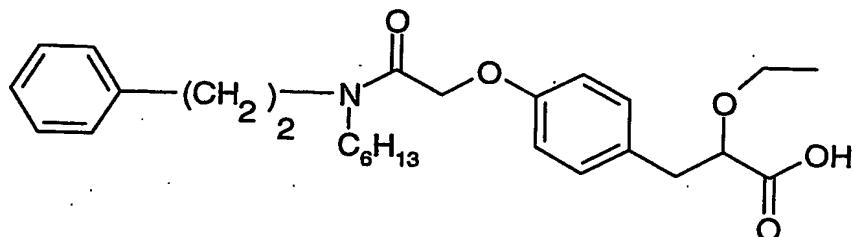


- 10 -

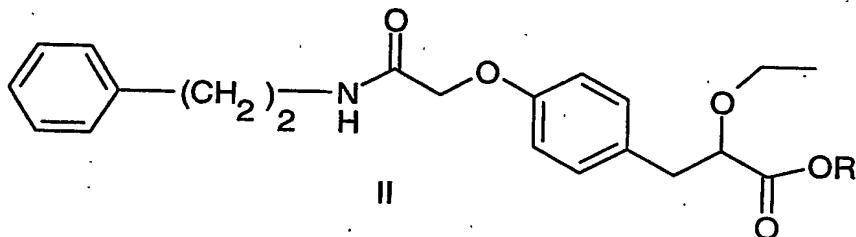
Claims:

1. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula I



5

in which a compound of formula II



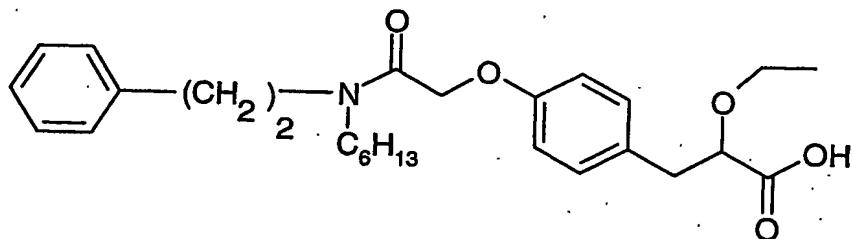
10 in which R is H or OR represents a protecting group for a carboxylic hydroxy group is reacted with a compound of formula III



III

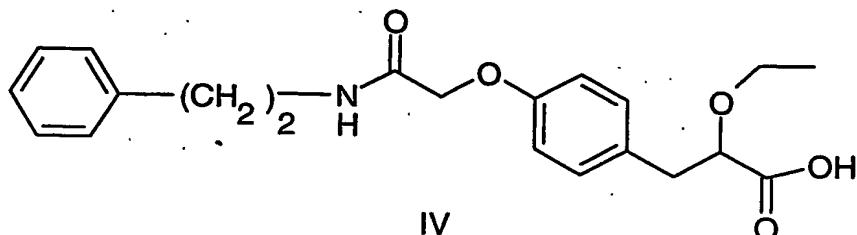
wherein X is a leaving group, in the presence of a base in the presence of an inert solvent at a
 15 temperature in the range -25°C to 150°C and optionally, when OR represents a protecting group, removal of the protecting group.

2. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula I



20 comprising reacting a compound of formula IV

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with a compound of formula III

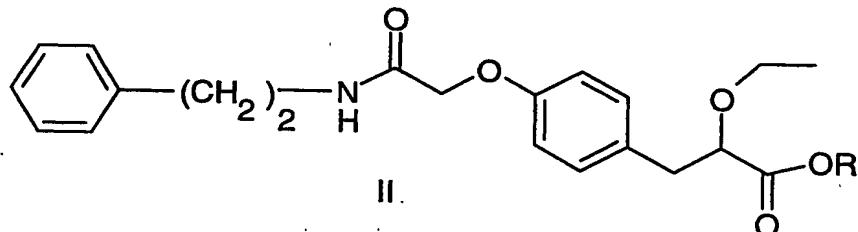
5



III

wherein X is a leaving group in the presence of a base in the presence of an inert solvent at a temperature in the range -25°C to 150°C.

10 3. A compound of formula II



in which OR represents a protecting group for a carboxylic hydroxy group.

15 4. A compound according to claim 3 in which OR represents a C_{1-6} alkoxy group.

5. A compound according to either claim 3 or 4 which is the 2S enantiomer.

20 6. The compound (2S)-2-ethoxy-3-(4-{2-oxo-2-[(2-phenylethyl)amino]ethoxy}phenyl)-propanoic acid.

7. A process according to claim 1 to produce the (2S) enantiomer of the compound of formula I by using the 2S enantiomer of the compound of formula II.